



Meeting Summary February 8, 2017

Attendance

Panel Members:

Hank Alinger, Chair (Excused)
Don Taylor, Vice Chair
Bob Gorman
Weiwei Jia (Excused)
Fred Marino
Sujit Mishra
Julie Wilson

DPZ Staff: Valdis Lazdins, Kristin O'Connor, George Saliba, Yvette Zhou, Lisa O'Brien

Plan #17-02: Hickory Ridge Village Center Redevelopment

Owner/Developer: Kimco Realty Corporation
Architect: Hord Coplan Macht, Inc.

Plan #17-03: River Hill Square

Owner/Developer: Stephen A Klein & Associates/River Hill Square, LLC
Architect: Brasher Design
Engineer: Benchmark Engineering, Inc.

1. **Call to Order** – DAP Vice Chair Don Taylor opened the meeting at 7:30 p.m. and explained that the DAP's focus is on design quality and site planning. The DAP does not have the authority to approve or reject projects. The DAP's role is to review projects and provide recommendations to improve design and layout.

Mr. Taylor asked the DAP, staff, and project team to introduce themselves.

2. Review of Hickory Ridge Village Center Redevelopment

Background

The concept plan and design guidelines were first reviewed by the DAP on December 7, 2016. At that time the applicant was asked to make some changes and return for a second review. The following motions provided guidance to the applicant:

1. That the applicant reconsider the scale, massing, and appropriateness of the residential wrapper building.
2. That the applicant consider a more sustainable approach so that the Hickory Ridge Village Center sets an example for all other village centers.
3. That the applicant not just look at the residential wrapper building, but also at the architecture of the Giant and the retail buildings to create an identity that works with the neighborhood and results in a unified project – including the senior living center and Goddard and the greater site.
4. That the applicant consider the layout of street B, its terminus, and how it loops around the project.

Applicant Presentation

The applicant gave a multimedia presentation and Mr. Beret Dickson, architect from Hord Coplan Macht, Inc., discussed the redesign based on the previous DAP motions. The residential building's frontage along Cedar Lane was reduced (to 70 feet) and the setback on Freetown Road was increased (by 15 feet) to match the setback of the Sunrise building. He suggested that the changes now make the residential building more compatible with neighboring setbacks. The residential building will now be set back 100 feet from the right traffic lane at the intersection of Freetown Road and Cedar Lane.

The façade of the residential building was also modified along Cedar Lane and Freetown Road. Its length was reduced and the façade was folded to reduce its visual appearance. Vertically, the residential building has a recessed upper floor, which reduces the appearance of height. Large green spaces are also located at the corners to reduce the building's visual impact and create a park-like setting. The ground floor retail creates a strong edge and provides a consistent architectural identity.

Architectural compatibility has been enhanced by eliminating the gable roofs of the Giant store. Tower elements, similar to the proposed residential/retail building, have been added instead. The color palette is also consistent with the residential building.

Mr. Matthew Fitzsimmons, planner from Hord Coplan Macht Inc., discussed the site plan, the layout of Street B, and sustainability. Street B remains an important pedestrian-oriented street and it strategically links the residential building to the commercial areas and Village Green. It provides a pedestrian/vehicular and visual connection to the Columbia Association (CA) site, since the residential building frames and creates an important streetwall link. The connection of Street B to the loop road is also an important connection for transit. KIMCO submitted an application to the USGBC last October and is considering further LEED initiatives later in the design process. The Village Center demonstrates smart growth principles by placing residential near retail, services, recreation, and open spaces and utility extensions are not needed. The proposed building will be more energy efficient than any other in Hickory Ridge. The design of the SWM has not been finalized but landscaping will be an important component (i.e., bio-retention for the streets and planter boxes at the residential building). Pervious pavers are also proposed to facilitate site drainage.

Mr. Greg Reed, of Kimco Realty, explained that the redevelopment process began 15 months ago. The original Village Center was built in the 1990s and retail has changed over the last 25 years. Redevelopment of the Center will provide 21st century retailing concepts. Originally, the buildings were designed to be farther apart, but after many rounds of community meetings their layout has

tightened up. Buildings are now closer to together and better relate to the village green where public events will occur. Smaller retail tenants will now have better visibility.

Staff Presentation

DPZ staff Mr. George Saliba summarized Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) staff comments and stated that written public comments were provided to the DAP in advance of the meeting. Mr. Saliba then stated that the project is subject to the Major Village Center Redevelopment process and is reviewed in accordance with Section 125.0.J.2. of the zoning regulations. Staff recommended the DAP evaluate the resubmitted concept plan for the Hickory Ridge Village Center redevelopment and provide design recommendations.

DAP Questions and Comments

The DAP said that the applicant's revisions were positive. The redesign of the Giant was more compatible with the rest of the site's architecture, but that Street B remains a concern. Some vehicles may still end up circling behind the Giant if they miss the turn into the parking lot. DAP recommended redesigning the entrance into the development. For example, changing paving materials and providing signage from Street A to Street B to signal drivers to avoid circling behind the Giant store would be helpful in directing vehicular traffic. The retail portion of the mixed residential building was also discussed and its relationship to Freetown Road. The DAP noted that it would be beneficial to have the commercial store fronts wrap around the corner of building at street B and the entrance off Freetown Road. This would provide a retail façade and enhanced visibility from Freetown Road.

The DAP was also concerned about the angled parking on Street B. If the only vacant space was on the opposite side of the street a driver would have to make a U-turn to park – a very awkward and difficult turn. The same issue applies to Street A. Some DAP members believed 90 degree angled parking would be a better approach. The applicant stated that angled parking makes Street B feel like a traditional Main Street and noted that parallel parking is located near the residential building.

The DAP then discussed and some proposed a street connection adjacent to the Village Green. The applicant stated that the original plan did include a street along the Village Green, but residents asked that to be eliminated because of safety concerns.

The DAP also discussed truck access, especially through the parking lot. The applicant said that the route is currently used by RTA buses and it should not be a problem, but that they would review it again.

The DAP asked to improve the pedestrian connection from the Village Green to the Goddard School and Sunrise Senior Center; making it a safer way across the site, as opposed to crossing a parking lot. The applicant will review that recommendation.

DAP Motions for Recommendations

DAP Vice Chair Don Taylor made the following motion:

1. That the applicant look at design options, such as paving and signage, to better direct vehicular traffic from Freetown Road to the main parking area. Seconded by DAP member Bob Gorman.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

DAP member Bob Gorman made the following motion:

2. That the applicant look at options that help avoid vehicles from driving through the service area behind the Giant. Seconded by DAP Vice Chair Don Taylor.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

DAP member Julie Wilson made the following motion:

3. The applicant should strengthen the pedestrian connections to the Goddard School and Sunrise Senior Center to the Village Green. Seconded by DAP Member Bob Gorman.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

DAP member Sujit Mishra made the following motion:

4. The applicant should continue to set an example as a green village center. Seconded by DAP Member Julie Wilson.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

3. Review of River Hill Square

Background

The 6.3 acre site, located on Clarksville Pike (MD 108) between Shepard and Linden Linthicum Lanes in Clarksville, seeks to redevelop the existing River Hill Garden Center. The project proposes two multi-tenant commercial buildings and a freestanding bank with a drive-through. The B-1 zoned site is located on the Clarksville Pike corridor and is subject to the 2016 *Clarksville Pike Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines* (CPSPDG).

Applicant Presentation

The applicant made a brief multimedia presentation and Mr. Chris Malagari, the project engineer, described the redevelopment plan. The existing building will be demolished - replaced with commercial buildings located near the existing garden center (10 feet closer to MD 108). Retail, a restaurant, post office, a free standing drive-through bank and parking at the front and rear of the site are proposed. The parking in front of the retail buildings will be closer to Route 108, while the parking at the rear of the site will accommodate post office patrons and employees.

The high point is in the center of the site, where the current building is located. The site slopes from the center towards Route 108 and the back property line. Currently, there are two onsite stormwater management ponds, which will be replaced with above ground Environmental Site Design (ESD) stormwater management practices. These include three sand filters and micro bio-retention cells to treat water quantity and quality.

Currently, there is a full turn site entrance onto Route 108. The project proposes two access points – a right-in and right-out only near to the current entrance and a full movement entrance at the Shepard Lane and Route 108 intersection. An eight-foot wide shared use path is proposed along Route 108 and a sidewalk will enter the site near the proposed bank.

Crosswalks are proposed in the parking areas. A sidewalk that connects to the shared use path at the north of the site will also tie in with the sidewalks along the retail buildings. The developer has discussed Route 108 access with the State Highway Administration (SHA).

The project landscape architect, Mr. Eric McWilliams, presented the landscape plan. He confirmed that the existing trees along the adjacent cemetery and fencing along the boundary shared with the church will remain, but that the area will be landscaped to satisfy County requirements. Due to overhead utilities along Route 108 and the proposed shared-use path, landscaping options are very limited. BGE will only allow certain tree species underneath utility lines so hawthorn trees are proposed. They will be augmented with a hedge to help soften the site from Route 108. The bio-retention facilities will also be landscaped, as will parking lot islands, and a hedge will buffer a proposed retaining wall. Fixtures and furnishings include bike racks, trash receptacles, light bollards, pedestrian scaled lighting, and two enclosed trash areas.

The project architect, Mr. Ron Brasher, described the architecture and its design concept. The mass and scale have been broken up by designing two buildings instead of one long building. The buildings and arcade emulate the existing garden center with pitched glass roofs and are articulated both vertically and horizontally. Building materials include glass, metal, brick, and stone. He then explained that retail will face both Route 108 and internally to the site and an outdoor eating area is proposed near a future restaurant.

Staff Presentation

Mr. George Saliba summarized the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) staff report and said that DPZ received many written public comments, which were provided to the DAP in advance of the meeting. Mr. Saliba recommended that the DAP evaluate the proposed architecture, site design and layout, landscaping and buffering, pedestrian and vehicular access and circulation, and sustainable design principles.

DAP Questions and Comments

The DAP agreed that the project should be consistent with the *Clarksville Pike Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines*. The DAP stated that buildings should be closer to the street with parking located to the side and rear, per the *Guidelines*. The applicant responded that the project is not in the downtown area of Clarksville and that other nearby developments do not fully comply with the *Guidelines*. The applicant explained that the parcel is triangular - making it more difficult to locate parking in the back. It is also out of place to have buildings set back differently than those on adjacent properties.

The DAP stated that non-conforming properties may have been built before the *Guidelines* were adopted in February 2016 and that the vision for the Clarksville Pike corridor is a Main Street development pattern.

The DAP was also concerned about the amount parking and wanted to reduce it to the maximum extent possible (including the post office service area). They also wanted to add landscaping to soften parking areas and buffer nearby homes, and relocate dumpsters away from residences.

The DAP was concerned that building forms, materials, and their location were not consistent with the *Guidelines*. The design of buildings and use of materials had a dated feel and the DAP asked the applicant to look at other nearby developments for design cues.

The DAP questioned the location and configuration of the proposed bank and felt that because of its location and site circulation it should be integrated into another building. They also believed that the sidewalks along building fronts were too narrow to support a robust pedestrian experience. They further recommended redesigning the courtyard area to maximize its potential; considering wider sidewalks, decorative paving, additional landscaping, a trellis, and more pedestrian amenities.

The DAP discussed the proposed Route 108 improvements, including vehicular access and pedestrian circulation. The applicant stated that the proposed changes have not been formally approved by SHA or the County. The DAP said the design of the site could change significantly depending on what is ultimately approved along Route 108.

DAP Motions for Recommendations

DAP Vice Chair, Mr. Don Taylor made the following motion:

Considering the number of comments and conflicts with the *Clarksville Pike Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines*, DAP recommends that the applicant reevaluate the design and return with a plan that better reflects the *Guidelines*. Seconded by DAP member Fred Marino.

Vote: 5-0 to approve

DPZ Director, Mr. Valdis Lazdins, requested the applicant to schedule a meeting with DPZ to discuss Route 108 access and the overall design.

Other Business:

The next DAP meeting is on February 22, 2017 at 7pm.

4. Call to Adjourn

Mr. Taylor adjourned the meeting at 8:50pm.